NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY PROJECT VELASCO WEST OAKLAND-MEXICAN

Interview with Dominga Velasco, Interview 1 (Tape partially erased)
Date of Interview: 28, July 1981 , Oakland, CA
Interviewer: Eleanor H. Swent
Transcriber: Tamar J. Nelson
Begin Tape 1, Side 1

53A, 53B

S: Abbreviation for Swent V: Abbreviation for Velasco

S: How did you happen to come to the states?

V: ...we came to visit my sister...my mother and I came to visit her her and we found we liked it and decided to stay. My mother and I were living in El Paso, and my two brothers were one in Los Angeles and one in Wichitaw, Kansas. So my mother says, "We'd better go to Oakland and if your brothers like to make a move, then they can come and stay in the same city," well that was her wish - to get the family together. So, we wrote to my two brothers and my other sister was in Mexico, and invited them to stay. And if they liked it they would stay, and if not they were going back - but they liked it and stayed.

S: When was this?

V: This was 1920.

S: Was it easy to integrate at that time?

V: We immigrated here in 1916 from Juarez, Mexico to El Paso. We've been here since 1920.

S: Did your sister have a reason for coming here to Oakland?

V: Well, her husband was working here in the shipyards. That was the beginning of the shipyards - 1920. He was working at Moore's Shipyards.

S: How did he happen to come here, do you know?

V: I guess like some of us after twenty years of revolution... (Note: at this point part of the tape was erased)

S: Was it because they lost property?

V: Well, politics, politics. The Revolución affected everybody, we couldn't stand it any longer, fighting all the time, one city to the other...so after all those years, we decided to come to the closest country.

S: Do you remember your impression of Oakland, when you first got here?

V: Yes, we didn't like it at first, because in El Paso, everywhere you go, they speak Spanish, you get there without knowing English and it's just like being in Mexico. But when we came here, there was Greeks, there was Portuguese, and Italians and from Iran, but not from Mexico. Most people (Mexicanos) passing through were going to Los Angeles...but there was no Mexican stores, no Mexican theatres, there was nothing, nothing. This was really a strange country.

S: And where did you live then?

V: On second and Henry.

S: And you were the only Mexicans...

V: We were the only Mexicans on that side of West Oakland.

S: Your brother-in-law was really the first step...

V: There were probably other people, but we didn't get to know them... because like I said, there was no restaurants, no places where you could see Mexican people. From work to home, there was no place really to go.

S: Did you go to school at that time, or were you through with school?

V: ...I went to evening school, Prescott School, and I started working at the cannery. I'd just turned 18...I earned $12.00/week, no $0.30¢/hour, that was big pay.

S: What cannery was it?

V: It was Pacific Coast Canning Co., on 16th and Willow. It was run by the Chinese. They even spoke Spanish, and very broken English. But they were running the cannery. (Note: At this point the rest of side 1, tape 1 was erased.)

---------- Side 2, Tape 1 ----------

S: Your daughters both married Mexican Americans?

V: My oldest daughter passed away when she was 16...my youngest did marry and she had Josephine and Carlos...my husband was about a year younger than I, he was from Mexico City. He came here and went to night school and learned English. He was one of the first radio announcers for Mi Rancho, they started a program and he was the first one they got. The people used to lend records for the program because they started the hard way. But they did a lot of good for the community, people used to announce their business... I think it was KALX...I can't remember. He worked for them for almost three years.

S: I guess you used to travel by street car and train...?

V: The Red Trains and the street car. The street cars, 0.05¢.

S: Was there one right near your house?

V: Yes, right on 14th...and on 7th street and on Clay to Berkeley...

S: Were there still orchards here in those days?

V: Yes...there were a lot of orchards in San Leandro, a lot of Mexican people, and the dryers that would dry the apricots, a lot of Mexican people during the season (picking fruit) and at the cannery... there was orchards all along the Diamond (in Fruitvale district).

S: Were there many Mexican people who lived here at that time?

V: There were quite a few at that time, yes, most of them were in West Oakland, and then they started moving to this part...

S: You think that most of the Mexican people who lived here moved here from West Oakland?

V: From West Oakland ...they started moving to 9th...Mary's Christian Church, the Portuguese church, there's a lot of Mexican people out there, the other side of the tracks, the other side of 29th, between Oakland and Alameda.

S: But they came from West Oakland?

V: They came from West Oakland, and then they, the Portuguese people , they used to live on East 9th and East 10th, they moved towards San Leandro and 90th Ave...and then the Mexican people moved in, and now part of them are still there and part of them moved to this district on Fruitvale. St. Anthony's Church and St. Elizabeth's Church and St. Charles' Church they always have Mexican priests, but this is for mostly the Mexican people.

S: Are there Mexican restaurants and grocery stores?

V: ...Oh yes, there is more business now...We opened up a little flower shop on Grant Ave. for a year, then we sold it and we had the Enchilada Shop for 10 years.

S: Oh, where was that?

V: On 7th street, between Castro and Grove. They just tore down that building a few weeks ago...

S: You've always lived with your daughter, or near her?

V: We always lived together ... I kept my mother until she died, she was over 100 years old when she died...Her memory and eyesight was good. She could tell the oldest history from Mexico, since the Revolución. She used to love to, and her memory was so perfect she even remembered the dates, the different groups during the Revolución, all the names of the generals...

S: You're just like her...

V: I wish I was...

S: Someone told me that you were one of the organizers of the group that became the Spanish Speaking Unity Council?

V: Well yes, we were a group of just a few...and we got together and they made us have our meetings at St. Mary's Church...So we started to get together...Where is the community? What are they doing? Nothing political, but the community...

S: Similar to the Zaragoza Club?

V: Yes, it was for the benefit of the community, not only Mexicans but latin people...after two years, we had a little business there and after the meetings they used to go to my restaurant and finish them, because the priest at St. Mary's used to say, "Well, it's time to close..." from there they started organizing people for fiestas, and started recognizing the need of the community, the schools...at that time the children used to complain about not wanting to speak Spanish in the house. In schools they made fun of them and the teachers said that they were prohibited to speak Spanish in the class. So they didn't know what to do, they were confused! At home we wanted them to speak Spanish, but they didn't want to speak Spanish, so there was a little confusion there. But later that was corrected and now they're able to speak their language...in the schools.

S: So the way they solved it was by letting them speak Spanish?

V: Yes, we started complaining to the Board of Education.

S: These were public schools?

V: Yes, and paroquial schools, in all the schools they weren't allowed to speak their language...they were very careful not to mix. "Speak English, because you're in this country and you're supposed to speak the language." They go home and we used to say, "Why don't you speak Spanish?" "Because if I speak Spanish in school they make fun of us..." but like I said, that thing was corrected later. We had evening schools...at this time there were more people coming into Oakland, hundreds of families, some from other states, some from Mexico...there we started having activities in the evening schools...so we had this teacher who was interested in seeing the culture of nationalities, so the Portuguese people used to present a program of dinner, recited poetry and dancing from their country...and then from there they knew that they had a group at Prescott School. They used to invite us from Berkeley to participate in the 4th of July Parade...we introduced ourselves in the Berkeley community, the Richmond community...

S: When did the Unity Council begin?

V: Almost 20 years ago...

S: What other people were in it besides Mexican and Portuguese?

V: A lot of people from South America, Peru, San Salvador, Chile...

S: Now, this Posada is also from the Unity Council, the people here are not all Spanish-speaking?

V: No, we have one lady that's Russian, we have Chinese, Japanese, we have from Peru, from El Salvador, Columbia, Portugal, Italian, we have two Italian ladies, we have German...

S: The people in this building were all living around this neighborhood?

V: Oh yes, there are 99 apts...yes, most of them lived here.

V: ...Before I used to go alone downtown, and nothing ever happened to me, but now you have to be more careful...now we have to be more careful, people just walk out of the building - kids, teenagers rob their purses and they knock them down, after 5 o'clock they close the doors here and you can't even go to the corner.

S: Are these changes taking place in the Spanish speaking community also? Or is it all Black, or...

V: ...yes, it's our kids, and Blacks...there's a new group of people they've been coming we don't know from where, the old people they used to live here, and they were beautiful people, they were nice neighbors, and well educated, respectable people, we used to get neighbors from both sides and for years in East Oakland, and they were nice people. But lately, new people come in and when they get out of school they don't act like people, they fight and they get in the street cars and they see an elderly person getting on and they push them aside and say, "Oh, you old bag," no education, at all. They go to school, but I don't know what education they're getting...they have no respect, especially for the elderly, they make fun so that's what's happening...

S: Does the Unity Council work with young people as well?

V: Yes, they do... in our community things are getting better...
(Note: at this point the tape was erased.)

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Dominga Velasco, Interview 2
Date of Interview: 14, August 1981 , Oakland, CA
Interviewer: Eleanor M. Swent
Transcriber: Tamar J. Nelson
Begin Tape2, Side 1

S: How did you happen to get that job and what did you do in those days to get a job?

V: Through one of my neighbors, she was a Portuguese lady...she'd worked in the cannery before, in March she asked if I wanted to work in the cannery. "The cannery is going to start this month in March," so she invited me to go with her and she introduced me, she told me where to apply for a job...

S: What type of things did you do in those days to apply for a job?

V: They just asked you how old you were, what nationality, Spanish or Mexican, in those days they used to be confused...there were a lot of Spanish people from Spain and a few Mexican people from Mexico, so they just asked questions, not very many...

S: Did you speak English then?

V: A little, enough to make myself understand.

S: Did you have to go at a certain time every morning?

V: Oh yes, 8 hours and one hour for lunch.

S: And that was good pay?

V: Oh, that was good pay for women...

S: Did you get any benefits?

V: Oh no, no benefits, no unions...

S: And what kind of work, what kind of job was it ?

V: We started with spinach, I never did do any canning work, just the clean up...

S: Just wash it off?

V: Clean it. From our place they took the spinach and have them wash it in another dept.

S: You didn't wash it?

V: No, we just cut the stem off, and just leave the leaves.

S: And this was all by hand?

V: All by hand, it was washed by hand...

S: Was it one a belt?

V: The belt went after, after we cleaned them, but we used to have

V: ...buckets in front of us after we cleaned the spinach we put them in a bucket and there was another lady who took the buckets to where they washed the spinach and from there they took them to the canning where the ladies were canning them.

S: It was all ladies? Working there?

V: Yes, except in mechanics and, no there were men too, but in a different department, the truckers...

S: What kinds of women?

V: Italians, Portuguese, Mexicans, Spanish and a few Greeks, a very few, most of them were people from the Hawaiian islands, they came from Honolulu to work...

S: These were Portuguese?

V: Well, they used to call them "Kanakas," they were from Hawaii. I don't know where they came up with that name...I remember one of these ladies she didn't know how to count...and sometimes they didn't even know how to write, they used to tell me that back home, they started to work real early and they never did have the opportunity to go to school, but t at happens not only over there, but in many countries...

V: I couldn't very well sit down and do this type of work, not for spinach or asparagus, but when the peach season came in and the apricots then you were able to sit down and work.

S: Did you do the same kind of thing, took the leaves off?

V: No, took the pits out of the apricots and peaches...

S: Was this done by machine?

V: No, all by hand...

S: No knife...

V: No, we used to have a certain...like a fork to take out the pits...

S: How did you feel about this job?

V: Oh, I like it, it was my first job, as my first job, I thought it was nice...we worked Monday - Saturday, we only had Sunday off.

S: Your mother didn't work?

V: No, no she never did work...I got married and she still was with us.

S: Now, this season, did it go continously...?

V: Uh huh, from March until October, then November they closed the ladies jobs, but the cannery stayed open because they used to clean all the mchines...

S: Did you have any priority then for the next year?

V: No, no priority. Next year the cannery started- the one that go first and applied was the one that got the job, but I didn't have to do that because that's when I went to San Francisco, and got a job in the candy factory.

S: Was it better pay?

V: Oh, yes, it was better pay, it was $0.50¢/hour. At first it wasn't $0.50¢/hour it was $0.25¢/hour, and after a year then...because you didn't have the experience.

S: Tell me about how you changed to the Alameda job?

V: Well, the reason I changed from San Francisco to Alameda is because I used to commute and at that time we only had ½ hour for lunch and I'm very slow eating and ½ hour wasn't enough for me. The sandwiches didn't agree with me so I came to see Dr. Guerra, he was the first Mexican doctor that came to Alameda. And a lot of people they at the present time they still remember Dr Guerra, because he was a lady doctor, especially a baby doctor. Then he introduced me to Miss Saylor, who had the Saylor's candy. Just a small store at the corner of Encinal and Park. Altogether we were about 20 people working , the packers and the dippers.

S: Were you all from Mexico?

V: No, I was the only Mexican, they never did have anybody Spanish or Mexican...there were a lot in San Francisco, there's always been a lot of Spanish people there in northbeach.

S: Were the Spanish and Mexicans friends?

V: Oh yes, there were more Spanish than Mexicans, like I said, very few Mexican people came in that year, 1920. In 1922 they began to come.

S: You were the only Mexican lady...

V: They told me I was the first Mexican lady that they'd hired...

S: ...that's hard to believe...

V: They didn't know, I guess, where to find Mexican people. Dr. Guerra is how I got the job...

S: Mr. Hooper was...

V: Gordon Hooper, after school he used to come and clean the tables and clean up the place (Saylor's) when he was going to high school... yes, he went and started his own business in a garage in here, in East Oakland, he rented a garage and then he hired one of the people from Saylor's... and a few months later he moved to Alameda on Clement and Park...I went to work for him too...

S: He's in Oakland right now?

V: After the place he had on Clement, he moved here....

S: Do you still keep in touch with any of those friends?

V: Oh yes, with...I keep in touch with Gordon and Mrs. Hooper...we become more like friends, they used to treat us like a family. They used to give us nice picnics and dinners, very nice people. Hooper's learned that from the Saylor business, to treat the people like they should be treated.

S: And did you work six days all that time?

V: No, five days monday-friday, unless it was Christmas and Easter, then we used to work on Saturdays. The demand for candy was double...

S: It was pretty steady...?

V: All year around, I worked all year around...we didn't have a union for five years after I started working at Saylor's, then the union came and then they used to pay us more.

S: Did you do anything to organize the union?

V: No, no not at all, somebody else took care of that.

S: Would you tell me what you know about the Club Zaragoza?

V: ...well, we started to get this group of neighbors and friends together, and we thought well, there's nothing going here about our country, there's just a few families and let's get together and plan something for the fiesta of September and 5 de Mayo.

S: Do you remember what year this was?

V: 1931-1940. So we organized...these people together...the sons of these people were interested in learning how to play the drums and the trumpets and bugles...we didn't have a mariachi, we just had a string orchestra - violin, mandolin and guitar...and all these people they learned from the older people...we used to play for parties...that's how we organized this club and the name was Banda de Guerra, because they played all tunes from the Revolucion. They played the Marcha de Zacatecas, rancheras, but they were the only group in West Oakland that used to play for fiestas...

S: For Christmas too?

V: Oh, for Christmas there was house parties, we used to have the Nacimiento, and they used to come and play and we used to make tamales and buñuelos, all those goodies for Christmas.

S: Did you have Posadas?

V: Posadas? Yes, we used to make posadas in the neighborhood, from one house to the other.

S: Were the Mexicans more or less, in the same neighborhood?

V: No, they used to come from not the same neighborhood, they used to come from other parts.

S: Did you invite other people who were not Mexicans to come?

V: Yes, everybody was welcome, oh yes.

S: Did they come?

V: Yes, they came, they'd join our parties, but most of them were Mexican people.

S: ...Who was Zaragoza?

V: Zaragoza was the general , the one that won the battle of Puebla from the French on the 5 de Mayo. September was when Hidalgo proclaimed independence...but Club Zaragoza was the name of this club, and they had the Banda de Guerra...the reason that we asked all of these neighbors to join us was because the younger persons were very interested in learning...that way they were getting some education in their own culture, but the oldest ones taught the youngest ones. Everybody was invited whether they were the mothers, and the sisters, ladies and men were invited...we used to have social dances on 11th and Clay, downstairs it was a furniture store. Upstairs it was a dance hall, and that's where the Mexican people used to have their dances. People used to come from San Francisco and from Hayward - they were social dances, there was no fights and no trouble, we didn't even have to have policemen, just the permit from the city...

S: Did they drink?

V: Yes, they drank, but they behaved.

S: Did people use Marijuana in those days?

V: No, not at all, well after the 40's, that started. After people came from over seas. You didn't even hear about it, the ones that used it didn't dare come to those groups...

S: Contests?

V: We used to have concursos...contests! Yes, for the most popular girl and boy. They were a lot of fun and then the girls used to like that...

S: It must have been a great place for matchmaking...

V: Oh, yes, sure!

S: Is that where you met your husband?

V: Yes, at the Club Zaragoza...my mother used to go out with me all the time, that's the custom in Mexico, they don't let the girls out alone, there's always somebody.

S: Where were you married?

V: Here in Oakland, in St. Joseph's church, on 7th and Chestnut. Father Galli was the priest. St. Joseph's was the church where most of the Mexican people used to come to, we understood the priests, they were Portuguese priests.

S: What happened during the second War?

V: I had the restaurant then, and we used to have all these sailors and soldiers...at that time we met a lot of people from Texas that were in the service and they used to come here and they to ask where is the Mexican neighborhood? 7th street. So they used to go to 7th street, and my restaurant was there, so they used to stop there and they were so happy to get here, right away, "Can we use your phone?" A lot of them were from big families so they used to call their mothers and their sisters and they were all so happy and they were so hungry for Mexican food, and they ate then they went to a dance, theymet some girls and then they used to bring some girls for dinner, so made a lot of friends...About that time there were three or four bars on 7th street and maybe another three, four Mexican restaurants, small places, they were all doing good business. People were working a lot, most everybody was working, there were enough jobs to keep everybody happy...but that's why we made good business in the restaurant. After the shipyards closed, then these people that came from other states went back to their homes. But there was nothing else here for them, but some of them stayed. But some of them went back to Colorado, New Mexico, Texas...

S: When did the Spanish Speaking Unity Council start?

V: Around the 60's...it really started in St. Mary's church. Because after the war, there were a lot of teenagers going the wrong way. And this Jimmy Delgadillo, he liked boxing very much, and he started a group of boys in the basement of St. Mary's church. Father Dougan used to let him bring and train these youngsters most of the time because they wanted to keep these youngsters busy, instead of going the wrong way, so they used to train them... so in order to keep all these youngsters busy, let's invite some of the families around here, we started having meetings in St. Mary's church with the priest. Then they formed the C.S.O., the Christian Social Organization, and that was the beginning of the Spanish Speaking Unity Council.

S: So this really started in West Oakland?

V: Oh yes, it started and then it moved to Fruitvale.

S: Was there any decision to move it?

V: Oh yes, because at that time we had these attorneys that we got to help out. Ed Reyes and they started certain rules and started asking the city for certain things, some help for the community and it was pretty hard for at least four-five years...

S: There were a lot of people involved in this, were you the only woman?

V: No, no there was Elvira Rose, and there was Emily from Berkeley,

V: and there was Mrs Corona from Berkeley too...and of course there was Arabella Martinez...

COMMENTARY

It would appear that Dominga Velasco was part of a well-known wave of Mexicanos who came into the United States (especially the southwest) during and immediately after the Revolucion of 1910. People came to escape the political turmoil and poverty that was gripping Mexico at that time. In the first tape this was lightly touched upon as we see on page one.

Studies have shown that entire villages have moved from Mexico to the U.S.. A consistent pattern in most ethnic groups seems to be that a male member (usually a young adult) immigrates here and after "establishing" himself sends for his family, or they begin coming to him. Dominga's case is a little unusual in that she immigrated over here with her mother. Evidently her father died when she was young and she was raised by her mother and her uncle.

She had a married sister living in Oakland who invited her and her mother to come join her. After four years in Texas herself, her mother and two brothers from Wichitaw, Kansas and Los Angeles all came here to Oakland in an effort "to get the family together."

It is unfortunate that her family life was not explored. While it was discovered that she did marry and have two daughters, aside from these bare facts there is no example of how her everyday life was AT HOME. We don't know from what her husband and eldest daughter died, or what traditions were carried on aside from celebrations for the Cinco de Mayo, 16th of Sept. and Christmas.

That a close knit family was important to Dominga's mother was evident in that the primary purpose in moving to Oakland appeared to be the unification of the family.

It would have been interesting to see whether she chaperoned her daughters as she was chaperoned by her mother, what they did at home after returning from work, how her husband felt about being unemployed and having her support the family, etc.

Dominga's work life was not unusual with the single exception that later on in life she became a business woman.

Her work in the cannery and candy factories and her description of her working peers as being newly immigrated and largely unskilled (eg: couldn't count or write) are conditions which continue to exist today. Immigrants, especially non-English speaking tend to be found in areas which require little skill, are low paying and that the average American worker finds monotonous or degrading, (eg: farmwork, factory work, janitorial, etc.). Mrs. Velasco's accounts put the Mexicano immigrants in the factories, canneries, shipyards and fields. While this continues to be true there is one minor exception - many immigrants (particularly the undocumented) are found today in non-unionized restaurants as waiters, busboys, dishwashers and cooks. This is very prevalent in the Bay Area where one can see Latinos, Asians and middle-easterners in many restaurants.

Dominga mentions a love for independence several times and this evidently motivated her to the point where she opened up a flower shop (this lasted only one year, it was closed after the death of her husband) and a small restaurant which served only dinners. It would have been interesting to note if other businesses catering to the spanish speaking were opening around the same time.

One would tend to think so. Her accounts of the Mexican servicemen patronizing her restaurant would lead one to think that other people would take advantage of their presence. This would have been a good area to examine - the impact of the servicemen in Oakland during World War II. Her description of the Mexicano servicemen

coming to the Mexican barrio (which was on 7th street) starved for Mexican food and friendly faces was not only interesting but touching as well.

The founding of the Club Zaragoza and the Spanish Speaking Unity Council is interesting in that the underlying reasons seem to be not only for social purposes but Dominga placed an emphasis on it being centered around the youth. The reasons specifically given were: 1) problems had arisen with the public and paroquial schools in regards to the forbidding of speaking spanish. This carried over in the homes where the children would refuse to speak spanish because they were being taught that it was bad. This problem existed for many years and indeed continues to cause problems today. Dominga's feelings on this are quite strong and she effectively communicates the social ostracism and degradation that they were made to feel. 2) Evidently after W.W.II, the teenagers began to go the "wrong way." In an effort to control this, a boxing club was formed and the community decided to unite around the issue. Other reasons brought out by Ms. Swent were the celebration of the Cinco de Mayo and the 16th of September. Here another interesting point surfaced, Dominga mentioned that they (the families in the Club Zaragoza) wanted to educate their children about their own cultural heritage, hence these festivities were an effort to do that. All in all, it would appear that the major thrust of the Club Zaragoza was an effort to educate and solve the problems of their youth, celebrations and social activites seemed to be of secondary importance.

It would be interesting to compare the organization of the social organizations formed by the other immigrating groups in the same area (eg: Portuguese, Greeks, Italians). Did they organize primarily for social reasons or were they also having problems with their youth? Did they integrate more easily than the Mexican community, did these social groups help or hinder this process? Did they celebrate national holidays from their mother countries like the Mexicanos did? etc.

The unionization angle was left unexplored. This would have been of particular interest in light of the fact that it has been well documented that undocumented workers are often used as strike breakers. It would have been interesting, and indeed important to see if many of the immigrating Mexicanos were undocumented and if so was their status ignored, were they used to keep wages low and to break strikes? Did the more established residents resent their coming in?

Another interesting aspect to cover would have been the Repatriation. During the depression many Mexicanos, both documented and undocumented as well as Mexican Americans (Mexicanos who were born here) were deported - incidences have been described which are reminiscent of the rounding up of the Japanese. Families were ousted from their houses in the middle of the night, ordered to bring only what they could carry and dumped on the other side of the border. Because Dominga was here during the depression this would have been a fascinating aspect to cover. If repatriation didn't occur here, did the Immigration Service start to crack down on the undocumented during the depression? etc.

The problems of integrating, prejudice, tensions between the more established groups were also not pursued. While we got a hint of it when Dominga spoke of the problems at school, it was left untouched. It is important to look into because it is important in examing the interrelationship between immigrating groups.

An interesting comparison would be to see what the youth of different groups did, and to compare the youth of her day with the Mexican youth in the Fruitvale today. She mentions the youth getting into trouble,

did they form gangs then, as they do now? Did the territoriality exist then as it does now? What caused the changes? An interview with someone young from the Fruitvale area would provide insight as well as an interesting comparison.

In summary, it would appear that Dominga's life was not , in the beginning an unusual one for a Mexican immigrant. This changed when she began to get involved in the community, became a community leader and owned a business.

NOTE: It should be mentioned that oral history is important amongst many Mexicanos and indeed has been used often by Chicano Historians in an attempt to document the history of the United States from the Chicano perspective. Dominga drives home this point when she describes how she admired her mother's ability to remember everything about the Revolucion, the dates, the names and how she would like to be just like her. It is an area that too many historians have ignored for too long.